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To Fix Error, House to Vote Again on Farm Bill

By REUTERS
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REUTERS 

WASHINGTON (Reuters) - The House of Representatives will vote again on sending the \$289 billion U.S. farm bill

to the White House to clear up an embarrassing clerical error discovered after the bill was vetoed, Democratic leaders said on Thursday.

They said the House would vote under rules that prevent any amendments and limit debate but require a two-thirds vote for passage.

The House also was scheduled to vote on a stopgap bill to keep Agriculture Department programs running until June 6. It would be the seventh short-term extension while Congress works on the farm bill, nearly eight months overdue. The current extension expires on Friday.

President George W. Bush announced a veto of the five-year bill and the House voted, 316-108, within hours to override the veto. Leaders decided the override was compromised because Congress gave Bush an incomplete copy of the farm bill, so they decided to ask the House to pass the bill again.

A spokesman for Senate Majority Leader Harry Reid said the Senate's plans for the farm bill were under discussion. Senators expected to vote on the override today.

House Agriculture Committee leaders said a clerical error omitted the 35-page trade title from the copy of the bill sent to the White House. Congress is required to provide exact copies of its bills for the president to approve or veto.

"Congress should now pass a farm bill that the president can sign or send him a one-year extension," said White House spokesman Scott Stanzel.

The farm bill expands funding for public nutrition, land stewardship and biofuel development but Bush says it will subsidize multimillionaire farmers when Americans face higher grocery prices.

(Reporting by Charles Abbott, editing by Matthew Lewis)

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